

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on July 27, 2004, and the references cited therewith.

No claims are amended, no claims are canceled, and no claims are added; as a result, claims 1-40 are now pending in this application.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-14, 17-18, 22-23, 27-29, 31-32, 36-38 and 40 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Steffensmeier (U.S. Patent No. 6,540,363) in view of Clarke (U.S. Patent No. 6,014,232). This rejection is respectfully traversed at least on the basis that the combination of references does not teach or suggest each and every element of the claims and that the references are not properly combinable.

The Office Action indicates that Steffensmeier “discloses a tiled display apparatus (Fig. 1) comprising a plurality of display devices (10 a, b, c) **wherein each display device is subdivided into a plurality of sections (10a, b, c)** and each section is configured to display a sectional (portion) image (col. 2, lines 26), a screen (S) and a plurality of lens assemblies (14), wherein the lens assemblies is optically coupled to each of the sections in the display devices to project the sectional (partial) image displayed on that section onto the screen, and the plurality of lens assemblies are configured to merge the projected sectional images to form a single tiled image (Fig. 1) (Col. 1, lines 45-60).” The Office Action then **contradicts itself** by stating that **“Steffensmeier does not disclose the subdivision of the display devices into plurality of sections.”**

It is clear in FIG. 1, the 10a is a projection channel. “Each projection channel projects a substantially mutually exclusive portion of an image onto a display area.” Abstract. The abstract makes it clear that a channel projects one portion onto the display. It has a single lens that may be adjusted. There is no teaching or suggestion that such a channel can be subdivided.

Clarke is cited as disclosing a plurality of panels 10, 20, and 30 that have sub-arrays of pixels. A micro-lens 42 is associated with a pixel or groups of pixels to provide a continuous image. The Office Action states that “it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to adapt the plurality of sections and plurality of lens

assemblies as disclosed by Clarke to the plurality of display devices as disclosed by Steffenmeier in order to constitute an uniform image and the join between the sub-arrays can be eliminated (Col. 1, lines 30-37)". This is not a suggestion that is derived from the references. It appears to be taking a desired outcome, and then indicating that it would be obvious to combine the references to obtain that desired outcome.

The language referenced in Clarke merely refers to the ability to provide optical enlargement of images provided by the subarrays to produce a uniform image. It does not provide a suggestion to combine the teaching of Clarke with Steffenmeier. Steffenmeier is directed toward projecting images from different channels to form a single image. It also adjusts the portions of the projected images when one channel is inoperative. No suggestion to combine it with Clarke is found. Without a suggestion from the prior art, the references are not properly combinable, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

The projection mechanisms of Steffenmeier also would make it difficult if not impossible to incorporate the teaching of Clarke. As indicated starting at Col. 3, line 21 of Steffenmeier, "a variable-power lens assembly 14a is disposed between light transmission module 12a and display screen S. Lens assembly 14a may include one or more individual lenses, at least one of which is preferably a bi-power lens that is capable of zooming or enlarging an image. Lens assembly 14a focuses and enlarges the portion of the image that is produced by LCD array 20a. Controller 8 controls lens assembly 14a through control wiring 32a so that portion 30a fills part of display screens.... FIG. 3 shows one possible failure example in which second projection channel 10b is inoperative. Controller 8 refocuses lens assemblies 14a and 14c so that the display screen is substantially covered by first and third projection channels 10a, 10c." As clearly seen by this language, Steffenmeier is directed toward covering for an inoperative projection channel by providing a bi-power lens to zoom or enlarge an image. Adding the subarrays of Clarke would greatly increase the complexity of the device, and may not even be feasible. Thus, one may be discouraged from trying to do so, even if one could find a suggestion to try.

Since each of the independent claims 1, 28 and 37 describe a plurality of display devices, where each is divided into a plurality of sections, and merging projected section images into a tiled image, the claims all are believed to distinguish the references. A prima facie case to combine the references has not been established, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 5, 24-25 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Steffensmeier and Clarke and further in view of Itoh et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,337,724). Since these claims depend from claims that are believed allowable, these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons. As such, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 11, 15-16 and 30 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Steffensmeier and Clarke as applied to claims 1, 7 and 28 above, and further in view of Sheridan (U.S. Patent No. 5,777,782). Since these claims depend from claims that are believed allowable, these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons. As such, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 19-21, 33-35 and 39 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Steffensmeier and Clarke and further in view of Schwarzenberger (U.S. Patent No. 6,128,054). Since these claims depend from claims that are believed allowable, these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons. As such, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 26 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Steffensmeier and Clarke and further in view of Zimmerman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,598,281). Since this claim depends from a claim that is believed allowable, this claim is allowable for at least the same reasons. As such, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 373-6972 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.


Respectfully submitted,

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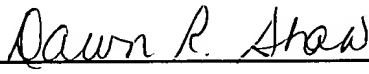
Date 10/27/2004

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this ____ day of October, 2004.

Dawn R. Shaw

Name


Signature